

I have worked to close any potential loophole in this legislation to ensure that the Commonwealth of Virginia could prevent casino-type gaming by the tribes. Having worked on this issue for several years, I have gotten to know many of the members of these tribes and believe they are sincere in their claims that gambling is inconsistent with their values. This position is already borne out by the fact that none of the tribes today engage in bingo gambling despite the fact that they have all established non-profit organizations that are permitted under Virginia law to operate bingo games despite compelling financial needs that revenues from bingo could address.

The real issue for the tribes is recognition and the long overdue need for the Federal Government to affirm their identity as Native Americans. Coupled with this affirmation is an opportunity for the tribes to establish a more equitable relationship with the State and secure Federal financial assistance for the tribes' social services, health care and housing needs. Many of their older members face the prospect of retiring without the pensions and health benefits that most Americans take for granted.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

MATTIE J.T. STEPANEK PARK

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, on June 24, 2004, this House passed a Resolution, H. Res. 695, honoring Mattie J.T. Stepanek and his "braveness, generosity of spirit, and efforts to raise awareness of Muscular Dystrophy."

Today I am pleased to note the June 18, 2005 groundbreaking for the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park at King Farm, to be constructed on the corner of Crestfield and Piccard Drive in Rockville, MD. Dedicated to a young man whose courage and vision for peace provide an example for all, his park will become a favorite for Maryland residents and visitors.

A young poet who was diagnosed with neuromuscular disease known as dysautonomic mitochondrial myopathy, Mattie Stepanek achieved international recognition when his collection of poems, *Journey Through Heartsongs*, which reached the New York Times Best Seller List in 2002. Mattie also authored four other books of poetry. He served as the National Goodwill Ambassador for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in 2002, 2003, and 2004, and in 2004 the Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon was dedicated to him. Mattie also befriended Oprah Winfrey, and was featured often as a guest on her television program.

One of his goals was to meet his hero, former President Jimmy Carter. When Mattie was hospitalized in September 2001, he got his chance. Nurses and staff recall that during their 15-minute conversation, Mattie did not discuss his illness with President Carter, focusing instead on problems affecting developing nations.

The former President and Mattie developed a close friendship, and when Mattie passed away on June 22, 2004 at the age of 13,

President Carter delivered a eulogy in which he recalled winning the Nobel Peace Prize. "Mattie shared the honor that I had received," he noted.

Mattie was a gifted poet, and a great companion to his mother, Jeni Stepanek. Mattie's sister, Katie, and his two brothers, Stevie and Jamie, died in early childhood from the same disease Mattie battled.

Plans for the 26.2-acre memorial park include a statue of Mattie with his golden retriever, Micah. The park will plan activities specially designed for people with disabilities, and it will host an event each year for local schools in the spirit of Mattie's passion for peace.

Mr. Speaker, Mattie was a child filled with compassion and imagination. He won the respect and friendship of a President and Nobel laureate, who continues to call Mattie the "most extraordinary person whom [he has] ever known."

No one who met Mattie Stepanek could ever forget him. Now future generations of Marylanders—who will not have that opportunity—will be able to visit Mattie's park, celebrate his life, and enjoy the sunsets he loved so much.

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING
TOM HARDY

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Tom Hardy has provided outstanding service and contributions while affiliated with the Ohio Association of Insurance Agents, Inc. serving it since 1976 and at different times holding the positions of executive vice president and chief executive officer; and

Whereas, Tom Hardy's many accomplishments include being the creator, publisher, and editor of Ohio Insurance magazine and guiding the continual growth of the Association with dedication and strong leadership; and

Whereas, Tom Hardy has served on the Board of Directors of the Griffith Foundation for Insurance Education at the Ohio State University where he received his degree in 1971 as well as giving his talents to multiple other organizations within his field; and

Whereas, Tom Hardy has worked selflessly and with dignity as an integral part of various committees of the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America, being the longest serving state executor in the Nation.

Therefore, I join with Tom Hardy's family, friends, and the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in commending Tom Hardy for his exceptional work and years of service, and wish him the very best in his future endeavors.

WELCOMING HER MAJESTY'S CANADIAN SHIP "TORONTO" TO
CLEVELAND, OH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Her Majesty's Canadian Ship *To-*

ronto, where she makes Cleveland her first United States stop on a series of port calls along the Great Lakes on Friday, July 15, 2005.

The HMCS *Toronto* is a multi-role patrol frigate built in St. John, NB, in 1992 and commissioned in Toronto, ON, in 1993. Certified operational in 1994 and homeported in Halifax, NS, the *Toronto* has distinguished itself and Canada through its participation in some of the world's most sensitive operations of the last decade.

The *Toronto* participated in Operation Sharp Guard in 1994, patrolling of the coast of the former Yugoslavia to restrict importation of arms and fuel in an effort to end the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 1995, the *Toronto* joined Operation Victory in Europe, an international flotilla of warships celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Allies' victory in Europe. As part of the Standing Naval Force Atlantic in 1997, the *Toronto* deployed for North Atlantic operations with the NATO squadron and was involved in a major search and rescue operation off the coast of Spain. In 1998, the *Toronto* participated in U.N. patrols in the northern Arabian Gulf to affect an embargo against Iraq. In November of that year, the *Toronto* became the flagship for the Canadian Task Group Atlantic, beginning an intensive year of operation, sailing in every Task Group exercise.

In 1999, the *Toronto* participated in Exercise El Morro Castle, a series of successful missile engagements against target drones and missiles, confirming the effectiveness of the ship's advanced missile defense system and crew's training. As part of the 2000 Search and Rescue operation at the site of the sinking M/V *Leader L*, the crew was involved in the rescue of 13 crew members in an accident in which 18 men perished. The following year, the *Toronto* responded to a distress call of a sinking fishing boat while conducting work-ups off the Nova Scotia coast and rescued three crew members in an accident that claimed one life. In 2001–02, the *Toronto* deployed in the eastern Mediterranean with NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic, and later to the northern Arabian Sea in international security operations. In 2003, the *Toronto* participated in Operation Splinter, aiding in the clean-up and restoration of Halifax following the devastation of Hurricane Juan. Last year, the *Toronto* returned to the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Gulf as Canada's contribution to the global war on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I am pleased that the officers and crew of the HMCS *Toronto* chose Cleveland as their first U.S. stop on the 2005 Great Lakes Tour. I welcome the *Toronto* to Cleveland and wish the *Toronto*, its officers and crew, and Canada, much success in their endeavors around the world.

CALL FOR MORE ROBUST TIES
WITH GULF OF GUINEA REGION

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the release of a very timely report which documents an issue of growing importance to the United States. The report, entitled